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TAGS: [PREL](#) [OVIP](#) [PGOV](#) [BL](#) [CI](#) [INAUGURATION](#)

SUBJECT: CHILEAN LEFTIST WELCOME EVENT FOR PRESIDENT EVO
MORALES COULD COMPLICATE BACHELET INAUGURATION AND
BILATERAL MEETINGS

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Emi L. Yamauchi for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d)

[11.](#) (U) As reported today in both major Chilean newspapers, the "Chile-Bolivia Re-Encounter Committee" has announced its intention to hold a massive public reception for Bolivian President Evo Morales. The proposed event could take place in the National Stadium on March 10 at 6:00 PM, one day before the inauguration of President-elect Michelle Bachelet. The organizing committee claims to consist of around "400 leftist social and political groups, including the Chilean Communist Party." (Note: A "group" could be as small as 10 individuals. End note.)

[12.](#) (C) According to the media, the Chilean Government is closely monitoring the planning of the event, but does not plan to intervene. Government Spokesperson Osvaldo Puccio reportedly met with the organizing committee to remind them that any "unforeseen difficulties" could create problems for already-delicate Chile-Bolivia relations. The organizers have apparently not yet requested approval for the event from the municipal government. (Note: A mid-level Foreign Ministry contact confirmed to the Embassy that this event has not been formally notified to the Chilean Government, nor have necessary permits been requested from the police and municipal authorities. End note.)

[13.](#) (U) Some concerns over the event were noted in the Chilean press:

-- The timing of the event could place unacceptable demands on Chilean security services, which will be preoccupied with the arrival of numerous foreign delegations;

-- It is possible Venezuelan President Chavez would attend the Morales event, further complicating things for Chile politically;

-- The event detracts from Bachelet's inauguration.

COMMENT

[14.](#) (C) Neither Lagos nor Bachelet privately is likely to welcome this -- at best -- sideshow to the inauguration. Nonetheless, it will be difficult politically to turn off, if the Chilean organizers forge ahead. Depending on how the event plays out, it may also be the top primetime evening news story on March 10, and a front-page print story on March

[11.](#)

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